

If archaeologists shrug this off, as most have done for years, we will allow the anti-archaeology lobby, notably a certain element in Treasure Hunting and the 'Boudicca' element, a completely free field not only to disparage archaeology, but also to alienate the interest which is there. Every local newspaper, TV and radio station will fall into your arms if you offer them the right sort of story. We cannot have many more Mary Roses, but at the local level, almost any archaeology is news. Only look at press cuttings from the 1950s and 1960s and see the number of photographs and reports of the discoveries of what we might regard as insignificant items of information: rotary querns, a handful of medieval pottery or half a dozen Roman coins. Put together the thrill of the finder of any of these, with the interest that they were found locally, and you have still got a good newspaper story. We may sometimes want to cringe at the puns of the headlines, the apparent naivety of the story or the cuteness of the photographs, and we may well regard them as unsuitable for archaeology - but they are unsuitable for the Times, not for the Sun. The style of local journalism is one that works and one that gets its message across, and we must be prepared to use it, or give journalists the material to use it. Feed your local papers with every little titbit you can and they will soon start to bite. Then the comeback starts and reports of finds like those in the papers start to come in.

Local TV and radio are pretty much the same, except that there, the stations have the added incentive of being able to entertain their audiences with a real archaeologist, and TV audiences have the time of their lives writing letters of complaint about scruffy hairies with shaggy beards putting them off their teas, but it makes archaeology stick in their minds.

These are the fields which archaeologists must now exploit, as a matter of the greatest urgency, or we run the considerable risk of losing popular, and I mean popular as opposed to elite, support for archaeology. If we once lose popular support we will eventually lose official support at its present level, and that will be the end of archaeology. Do not underestimate the opposition; the anti-archaeological campaign of 'Boudicca' is a serious challenge. It is well-conceived and well-written - it is a fine piece of journalism of its type. The archaeological establishment will take a decade to react, so it is up to us to react locally to create a new level of public involvement and public interest in archaeology.

## SWORDS TO PLOUGHSHARES: A NATIONWIDE SURVEY OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND TREASURE HUNTING CLUBS

David R. Crowther

### Introduction

In the spring of 1978, the author distributed questionnaires to every provincial museum in Great Britain (plus two in Northern Ireland), a selection of archaeological Units, and every metal detecting club then known, in order to generate data for a dissertation examining what was then a booming new hobby called treasure hunting (Crowther 1978). Since then much has changed: we now have revised ancient monuments legislation (HMSO 1979), a STOP campaign (Cleere 1980) entering its fourth year, and a heightened awareness amongst the protagonists of the academic and social issues that are at stake (Fowler 1977:188). Whether or not this greater awareness has yet been infused into the public consciousness is open to question. What is certain, is that the problem is not limited to Britain alone, nor is the hobby likely to be a passing fad like yo-yos, skateboards or dietary roughage. An EEC quango has recently reported on the whole issue of "Metal Detectors and Archaeology" (Council of Europe 1981). In its 133-page report, the Committee on Culture and Education has recommended greater legislative protection of sites and control of metal detector use, including the introduction of licensing or registration of metal detector owners, and the wider dissemination of information in the form of publicity campaigns, new education policies and liaison. To pay for this, it recommends that greatly increased resources should be allocated to archaeology, together with the establishment of a rational career structure for its practitioners. One awaits its implementation with interest. As a more modest contribution to the debate, what follows is a summary of the 1978 survey. The dissertation is lodged at the Institute of Archaeology, London.

### Survey Distribution

A total of 292 questionnaires was distributed to 192 museums and 38 Units derived from the Archaeologists' Yearbook 1975 and 62 treasure hunting clubs recorded on a national list as published by Treasure Hunting magazine in 1978. Responses were received from 114 museums (59%), 26 Units (68%) and 27 clubs (43%).

Figure 1 shows the distribution of museums (circles) and Units (triangles) that were consulted; those which replied are represented by filled symbols. The responses are geographically diverse enough to offer information from most regions of the country.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of treasure hunting clubs which replied (filled circles) and those which did not (open circles). As well as following population centres there is a significant presence in coastal towns, presumably reflecting the interest in beachcombing. Figure 2 also shows those museums and Units (squares and triangles respectively) which, from questionnaire replies, were aware of club activity in their area. Open squares represent those museums which had no knowledge whatever of any local metal detector activity. Clearly some museums were unaware of local clubs existing; it is also apparent that there were clubs in East Anglia and the West Country which were not contacted in the survey. Where concentrations of clubs did not reply, as in Somerset and south Essex, there were museums which stated that there was no local treasure hunting activity.

### The Replies

The questionnaires provided ample space for free-text replies. It was decided not to offer ranges of pre-printed answer options in order to avoid introducing any bias into the results. In hindsight this was probably a mistake; at some stage the data had to be ordered, and this was done by imposing on the replies the present writer's own interpretation. Every attempt has been made to keep faith with the individual views expressed by museums, Units and treasure hunting clubs which replied, often at great length. Not all replies were that easy to categorise accurately; the circumspect nature of some of the reply categories that follow is designed to reflect this.

### Museums Questionnaire

Replies are expressed as: number (percentage).

1. Name of museum. 2. Area responsible for.  
(Crowther 1978, Appendix 1) (Crowther 1978, Appendix 1)
3. Is there a keen interest in local history, reflected possibly in good museum attendance, active history and archaeological societies, etc.?  
92 (80) YES 18 (16) A LITTLE 1 (1) NO  
3 (3) DON'T KNOW / NOT APPLICABLE
4. Does the museum try to popularise the local history apart from the permanent displays (special exhibitions, lectures, etc.)?  
80 (70) YES 15 (13) A LITTLE 17 (15) NO  
2 (2) NOT APPLICABLE
5. Do you have any knowledge of 'treasure hunters' operating in your area?  
80 (70) YES 20 (18) A LITTLE 1 (1) SUSPECTED  
13 (11) NO
6. If not, are you aware of any increase in the number of stray finds brought into the museum in recent years for examination and valuation?  
28 (25) YES 1 (1) A LITTLE 45 (39) NO  
40 (35) NOT APPLICABLE
7. If there are treasure hunters, do they operate as clubs or individuals?  
36 (32) BOTH 63 (55) INDIVIDUALS 14 (12) NONE  
1 (1) DON'T KNOW

8. Do you have any liaison with such people?  
16 (14) YES: REGULAR CONTACT / ADVICE 49 (43) NO  
48 (42) YES: INFORMAL / INFREQUENT 1 (1) UNDER REVIEW
9. Treasure hunting can be a problem for two reasons:  
a. Damage to scheduled ['and unscheduled' should have been added] sites.  
b. Irrevocable loss of knowledge through inadequate recording of finds.  
Such problems can be approached in a number of ways:  
1. Ban the sale and use of metal detectors altogether.  
2. Have much greater protection of the archaeological heritage with heavier penalties for people convicted of treasure hunting on scheduled sites.  
3. More control over the use of metal detectors, such as the establishment of specific 'Metal Detector Licences' (at present only [the equivalent of] a radio transmitter licence is required) which, like a driving licence, could be withdrawn from those who act illegally.  
4. Establish a rapport between treasure hunters and archaeologists such as exists in Norfolk and Dorset, so that through such cooperation, treasure hunters can learn to use their machines responsibly and usefully, contributing to the archaeological knowledge of the area.

Do you approve of these approaches or do you favour any others?

- 1: 12 (11) YES 2: 76 (67) YES  
10 (9) POSSIBLY 6 (5) POSSIBLY  
3: 57 (50) YES 4: 70 (61) YES  
5 (4) POSSIBLY 18 (16) POSSIBLY
10. The problem of adequate recording of finds is a serious one. Would you be prepared to make arrangements with local treasure hunters for them to deposit objects and log books for an agreed period to allow identification and official recording?  
89 (78) YES 9 (8) POSSIBLY 10 (9) NOT POSSIBLE  
2 (2) UNDER REVIEW 4 (3) NO
11. Organised clubs might be expected to work to higher standards of recording, such as the accurate plotting of find spots. However, even the most basic surveying equipment can be expensive (plane tables, 30m tapes, etc.). Would you be prepared, if necessary, to help them borrow such equipment from local digging groups or similar sources?  
44 (39) YES 11 (9) POSSIBLY 18 (16) NOT POSSIBLE  
2 (2) UNDER REVIEW 39 (34) NO

### Units Questionnaire

1. Name of organisation 2. Area responsible for.  
(Crowther 1978, Appendix II) (Crowther 1978, Appendix II)
3. Do you have any knowledge of treasure hunters operating in your area?  
24 (92) YES 2 (8) A LITTLE
4. Do they operate as clubs or individuals?  
17 (65) BOTH 7 (27) INDIVIDUALS 2 (8) DON'T KNOW
5. Do you have any liaison with such people?  
4 (15) YES 12 (46) A LITTLE 10 (39) NO
6. (As Museums Q9)  
1: 3 (11.5) YES 2: 18 (69) YES  
3 (11.5) POSSIBLY 2 (8) POSSIBLY  
3: 10 (38) YES 4: 13 (50) YES  
2 (8) POSSIBLY 7 (27) POSSIBLY
7. Do you know of any instances when a metal detector has been used for archaeological reasons?  
11 (35) YES 17 (65) NO

8. Has your organisation ever used one?  
 8 (23) YES 20 (77) NO
9. Would your organisation consider using one under any circumstances?  
 9 (35) YES 6 (23) POSSIBLY 11 (42) NO

#### Discussion of Results from Museums and Units

##### 1. The degree of contact between the archaeological establishment and treasure hunters.

In answer to Museums Q3 about whether or not there was "keen (public) interest in local history", only one museum felt constrained to write an unequivocal 'no', and that was where a full-time staff position had existed for only two years.

Of the 15% of museums that had no programme of temporary exhibitions or other means of actively encouraging local interest, as many as 70% were aware of treasure hunting activity in their area; this figure rose to 92% for those museums that did pursue active education policies. Many of those museums which believed there to be no local treasure hunting fraternity were to be found in upland areas of Britain, where arable is scarce or non-existent and where sites are therefore not popularly characterised as finds scatters, a factor which several replies referred to.

Amongst the Units, all were aware of metal detector activity in their regions. Only 8% of Units and 1% of museums had no idea as to how this activity was channelled (i.e. individuals or both individuals and clubs), though with reference to Figure 2, just how accurate a picture these agencies could really paint is uncertain.

Only 14% of museums and 15% of Units had built up any form of regular contact with local metal detector users, though 42% of museums and 46% of Units had occasional contact with them. More significantly, no less than 43% of museums and 39% of Units had had no liaison with local treasure hunters whatever.

##### 2. How the archaeological establishment might approach the problem of treasure hunting.

Museums and Units were offered four means of approaching the problem and were invited to select any one or a combination of the following:

- (1) Banning the sale and use of metal detectors.
- (2) Greater legislative protection of sites, with heavier penalties for convicted parties.
- (3) Introducing licences to control the use of metal detectors.
- (4) Establishing liaison.

An outright ban was favoured by 11% of museums, 11.5% of

Units. A further 9% of museums and 11.5% of Units, though approving of such action, recognised the improbability or impracticality of such a ban.

Stronger legislation was considered highly desirable by 67% of museums and 69% of Units, though doubts about it ever happening, or whether stiffer laws and penalties would ever be enforceable, were expressed by a further 5% of museums and 8% of Units.

As for the suggested introduction of metal detector licences which, like driving licences could be subject to penalties, 50% of museums and 38% of Units thought this a good idea. A further 4% of museums and 8% of Units agreed to it in principle though doubted its feasibility.

The formulation of a liaison policy similar to the Norfolk model (Green and Gregory 1978; Gregory this volume) was favoured by 61% of museums and 50% of Units, though many saw this reluctantly as a pragmatic necessity. A further 16% of museums and 27% of Units accepted the need for such a scheme whilst expressing concern about compromising the archaeologists' academic and moral position and giving treasure hunters a mantle of respectability that should not exist.

The breadth of opinion among museums and Units is broadly similar. The vast majority of replies, naturally enough, favoured combinations of these approaches, occasionally to the extent of selecting approaches which would be diametrically opposed, such as 1 and 4: 1 would be the long-term goal, but until its successful implementation, 4 would provide a temporary benefit.

Figure 3 presents the combinations of approaches selected by museums and Units ranked in order of popularity. Those choices which included liaison within them are indicated by hatching. It can be seen that the most punitive approaches tend to be the least popular, though there is a general acceptance that no one approach is 'the answer'. The general trend is for 'cautious rapport' and greater legislative protection. It would be interesting to know to what extent the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979) has satisfied this latter demand.

Two supplementary questions were asked of museums: whether or not they would be willing to arrange for treasure hunters' finds to be deposited at the museum for an agreed period for identification and recording (only 3% would not be willing); and whether or not museums would be prepared to help treasure hunting clubs borrow surveying equipment from local archaeological sources to facilitate accurate recording of their finds. This last question was by far the most contentious in the museums'

questionnaire, for, if acceptable, it would take rapport a considerable step beyond basic information exchange. The replies were more divided than for any other question: 39% were in favour, 34% against. A further 9% thought it not wholly unreasonable, though held profound doubts about adequate supervision or carrying the whole thing too far. The replies assume greater significance when measured against those that were aware of metal detector users operating in their area. Of those who were aware of such activity, 48% were in favour of this 'high' level of rapport, 35% were not. Of those who had no knowledge of local treasure hunting at all, those in favour of such a scheme remained about the same at 50%, while those not in favour were significantly fewer at 21%, suggesting a greater resistance to such a scheme from those who actually had the problem 'on their doorsteps'. However, among those who actually had experience of liaising with local treasure hunters, willingness for such a scheme was higher, at 55%, than among those who engaged in no contact, of whom only 40% found such a scheme to their taste. Equally, resistance to this 'high' level of rapport was greater (40%) among those who engaged in no liaison, than among those who already had developed some form of contacts with local treasure hunters (30%).

These figures are likely to reflect the fact that the more liberal (some would say gullible) museum staff had, by 1978, already engaged in some level of contact with local treasure hunters.

Three further questions were asked of Units in order to glean something of their attitudes to the use of such machines in the field. Of those Units that replied, 65% admitted to never having heard of metal detectors being used for 'archaeological reasons'; 23% had used such a machine themselves. Most interesting, perhaps, is that 42% would not consider using one under any circumstances. This last question brought the most divided response, in that 35% would use a metal detector if necessary; a further 23% had doubts about its real merits as a survey tool, and held reservations about the legitimising effect such use might have for such machines in the public eye. This was seen as a factor which might lead to treasure hunters gaining easier access to sites in the future.

#### Treasure Hunting Clubs' Questionnaire

1. Name of organisation.  
(Crowther 1978, Appendix III)
2. How long in existence?  
7 (26) OVER 3 YEARS    3 (11) 1-3 YEARS    17 (63) UNDER 1 YEAR
3. How many members?  
15 (56) OVER 50    8 (30) 20-50    3 (11) UNDER 20

4. How often do you go metal detecting?  
8 (30) MORE THAN FORTNIGHTLY    6 (22) EVERY 2-4 WEEKS  
4 (15) NO REPLY / NOT    9 (33) MONTHLY OR LESS  
APPLICABLE (bottle collectors or 'dump diggers')
5. Do you work as a group on specific club projects, or as individuals?  
10 (37) PREDOMINANTLY CLUB    14 (52) PREDOMINANTLY INDIVIDUALS  
3 (11) INDIVIDUALS
6. What do you find most appealing about the hobby?  
1: 11 (41) RELAXATION / PEACE AND QUIET  
2: 19 (70) UNCERTAINTY / EXCITEMENT  
3: 11 (41) EDUCATION  
Chosen combinations in order of popularity:  
2: 7 (26) 1+2: 6 (22) 3: 4 (15) 1+2+3: 3 (11) 2+3: 3 (11)  
1+3: 1 (4) 1: 1 (4) NOT APPLICABLE: 2 (7)
7. How important is the incentive of financial gain?  
4 (15) SOME IMPORTANCE    11 (41) MINOR  
11 (41) NOT AT ALL    1 (3) NOT APPLICABLE
8. Have you ever found anything of value?  
9 (33) NO    13 (49) YES    2 (7) OFTEN    1 (4) NOT APPLICABLE  
2 (7) DEPENDS ON WHAT YOU CALL VALUABLE
9. No doubt you have come across several types of detector. Although it must be largely a question of 'getting what you pay for', which detectors would you recommend (alternatively, which would you avoid)? [see discussion p. 16]
10. There are many archaeologists in Britain who are worried about the present situation as regards metal detectors. Sites have been damaged in the past by treasure hunters, and it is felt that the lack of systematic recording of finds can only be destructive to the total knowledge of our past. How do you feel about this controversy?  
7 (26) CRITICAL    19 (70) SYMPATHETIC    1 (4) NO COMMENT
11. Do you think it would be a good idea to introduce a specific 'Metal Detector Licence' which, like a driving licence, could be withdrawn from individuals who break the law?  
11 (41) YES    8 (30) POSSIBLY    1 (4) NO COMMENT    7 (26) NO
12. A 'Code of Conduct' is at present being prepared by the Council for British Archaeology, 112 Kennington Road, London SE11, for treasure hunters. A similar document has been prepared by Norfolk Museums Service, Castle Museum, Norwich NR1 3JU, for their local treasure hunters. Would your club be prepared to affiliate itself to a group such as the National Association of Metal Detector Clubs and use such a code as an established standard maintained by all affiliated members (breaking of the code could mean expulsion from the society)?  
15 (56) YES: ALTHOUGH WE HAVE OUR OWN CODE  
9 (33) POSSIBLY: ALTHOUGH WE HAVE OUR OWN CODE  
3 (11) NO: WE HAVE OUR OWN CODE
13. Do you have any contact with local archaeologists or museums?  
16 (59) YES    8 (30) A LITTLE    3 (11) NO
14. Once an object has been taken out of the ground, its value to the archaeologist has largely been lost unless adequate steps are taken to record that find properly. Find spots should be plotted on plans, though surveying equipment is, of course, expensive. In establishing a working relationship with your local museum or archaeological society, you may be able to gain access to some adequate equipment for this purpose, such as plane tables and 30m tapes. Copies of the plans produced could then be submitted to the local museum or archaeological society. Equally important would be the lending of the objects themselves (for an agreed period) for identification and official recording. Would such an arrangement be acceptable to your group, or are you already employing such a system?



- 1 (4) DO SO ALREADY 11 (40) DO SO TO A LESSER EXTENT  
 7 (26) YES WE WOULD BE WILLING TO FOLLOW SUCH A SCHEME  
 4 (15) POSSIBLY - FOR CERTAIN SITES  
 4 (15) NOT NECESSARY / IMPRACTICAL  
 15. If at present you are not in contact with your local archaeologists, what arrangements for the recording of finds do you have? [see pp. 17-18]

### Discussion of Results from Treasure Hunting

#### 1. Club composition and activities.

The dramatic growth in the popularity of the hobby is well expressed in answer to Q2, where nearly two thirds of the clubs were less than 12 months old when the survey was conducted. This should not be seen as a direct reflection of the growth of the hobby per se, though it is undoubtedly indicative of that growth. Rather, it reflects the success of a policy of Treasure Hunting magazine at the time, in encouraging club formation by publishing names and addresses of those wishing to form clubs, and providing on request a free list of clubs already in existence. Given that over half had more than 50 members (largest membership: 107), it is unlikely that the majority were mere ephemeral groups.

The underlying motives behind the hobby (Questions 6-8) are seen in the main as therapeutic ('getting away from it all' was a typical reply) together with the fun and anticipation of the hunt. This emphasis on the seeking rather than the finding, together with the individual's pursuit of pleasure in solitude as well as in groups, makes the hobby more akin to fishing than to amateur archaeology; although 41% expressed a sincere interest in 'the past' at some level, the remaining 59% sought no educational benefit from the hobby.

In recommending machines in answer to Q9, replies generally favoured middle-priced Induction Balance models rather than more expensive and powerful types. This view presumably stems from the hobbyists' desire to have a machine whose value is measured in 'fun' rather than catchment alone. Clearly, if a machine is not capable of recovering a reasonable selection of metal items, then from the hobbyist's point of view it is useless. However, because the motives for pursuing the hobby are not solely concerned with the efficient recovery of all metal work, it should come as no surprise that the majority were satisfied with their tried and trusted machines. The archaeologist, on the other hand, does need a means of recovery which will produce a reliable sample of a population. There can be little doubt that on certain sites, the recovery of such a sample of metalwork from a ploughsoil prior to excavation may yield information not available from conventional fieldwalking. Such was the premise on which a metal detector survey at Maxey in Cambridgeshire (Crowther 1981) was based.

#### 2. Attitudes towards archaeology.

Questions 10-15 sought the views of clubs on many of the issues which dominate the debate about private treasure hunting versus public archaeology. The questions were designed to encourage a balanced response to a reasoned argument. In the main this happened, though for Q10, even some of the sympathetic replies felt that 'too much fuss' was made about detecting on 'non-archaeological' sites, and that eventually archaeologists would be grateful for the new information treasure hunters supply. However, as many as 85% of the sympathetic clubs agreed that recording was necessary and that club formation was important in helping to solve the problem. Despite the fact that all followed 'codes of conduct' mainly along the lines of that published by Treasure Hunting magazine (reproduced in Council of Europe 1981:110), it is difficult to see how these clubs can monitor their members' behaviour in quite the way they have suggested, given that club outings are inevitably less frequent than individual hunts. Criticism of archaeologists was extreme in only three cases, which described the statement in Q10 as "absolute rubbish", "sour grapes", and even "born out of almost total ignorance".

To the suggested introduction of licences, 41% were in favour, with a further 30% agreeing to such a scheme though doubting whether it would stop the ruthless treasure hunter, and holding reservations as to whether this represented 'yet another' infringement of the rights and freedoms of the individual.

Affiliation to a body of national treasure hunting clubs to maintain standards was approved of to a greater or lesser extent by no less than 89% of those questioned. In 1978 there were two attempts to create an effective organisation for the 'responsible' treasure hunter: the National Association of Metal Detector Clubs, and the British Treasure Hunting Association. Since then, a more effective national or corporate entity has emerged in the form of DIG (Detector Information Group) set up as a direct response to the STOP (Stop Taking Our Past) campaign. Whatever latent desire for a national identity existed has now been channelled along radically different lines, in that DIG sets out to counter what it sees as archaeological 'propaganda'. For the time being, the 'sour grapes' mentality enjoys a position of dominance as the most effective means to champion its members' 'rights'. This is a most regrettable development.

Those who claimed some kind of contact with their local museum or archaeological society totalled 89%. Seventy per cent would be willing to engage in an elaborate scheme of finds plotting and recording, and information exchange with their local archaeological agency, though the remaining 30% would either comply only under very special circumstances, or would not comply

at all on the grounds that the whole idea was largely a 'waste of time'.

Eighty-five per cent had adopted recording schemes at some level, though standards varied between the competent (locating finds by square, radial or offset methods) and the minimalist (dated lists, provenanced by site). One club had bought its own surveying equipment out of club funds and had photographed all its finds. Five clubs (14%) appeared to see recording of finds as synonymous with taking them to a museum for identification. Given the long, explanatory nature of the printed questions, this was disappointing.

### Concluding Comments

Equipped with the data, it is tempting to try to draw some meaningful conclusions about the nature of the problem and ways of solving it. This temptation has largely been resisted as the statistical validity, and even the verity, of replies may be open to question. Also judgement can be coloured by personal bias and is best left to the reader.

With such a small Units reply population (26), individual replies assume greater weight than in the more statistically acceptable museums sample (114). Nevertheless, a striking similarity of opinion between the two has been noted.

The treasure hunting club replies spoke for only 1100 local club members, perhaps 1% of the nation's treasure hunters. Given that most hobbyists are not club members, this sample is probably atypical, being skewed towards the 'responsible' pole of opinion.

Even so, to what extent can questionnaire replies be considered honest enough to reflect any sort of reality? The questions were asked by an archaeologist, and the answers may have been tempered accordingly. The questionnaire provided the opportunity for treasure hunting clubs to present themselves in a light which they would expect an archaeologist to find favourable, an opportunity that was taken up by less than half of those to which it was offered. Nevertheless, significant numbers of metal detecting club replies were prepared to admit to having little interest in history and could muster only the vaguest appreciation of observation and documentation obligations. Even those who did feel any affinity towards the historical value of their finds often expressed this interest in a curious way. Theirs is a heritage which can be encapsulated within a boxful of metal objects. Ruthless profiteers apart, such hobbyists seek to bring the past to life; an archaeologist would say they trivialise it. Whatever their aims, the net effect tends to remain the same: namely an arbitrary, if generally naive, vandalism of the archaeological record.

As guardians of our collective heritage, it is essential for archaeologists to promote a proper public regard for that heritage, accepting the premise that education (used properly and responsibly) can be as powerful a protective tool as a scheduling order. Unfortunately, public enlightenment takes tact and diplomacy, time and resources, all of which are in short supply. Short cuts can bring illusory benefits: recent publicity campaigns have drawn some media attention to the issues at stake, but at what cost? In blanket condemnation of metal detector users, are we not in danger, if not already guilty, of alienating the very people we should be trying to reach? Polemic is no substitute for dialogue. The intellectual chasm between archaeologist and public is nowhere better illustrated than in the current treasure hunting vogue. Chasms need bridges to be built, not burned; one suspects that until we let Archaeology speak unto Treasure Hunting and vice versa, solutions will remain as elusive as King John's treasure.

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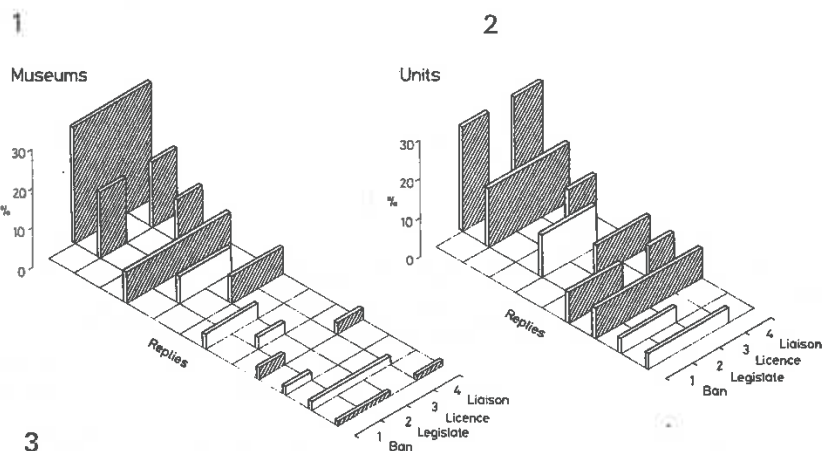
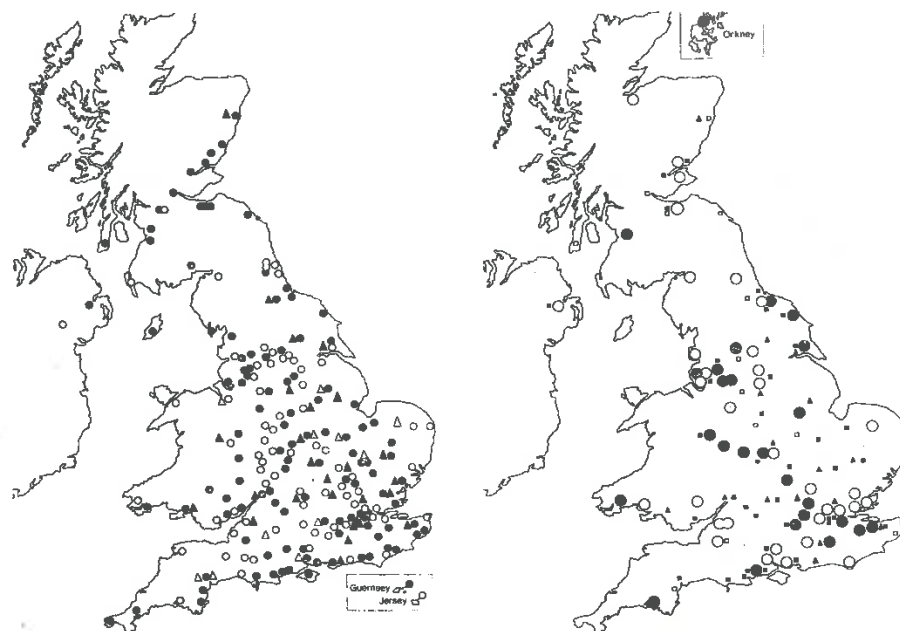


Fig. 1 Distribution of museums (circles) and Units (triangles) in the survey. Replies expressed as solid symbols.  
 Fig. 2 Distribution of treasure hunting clubs (circles) in the survey. Replies expressed as solid symbols. For explanation of other symbols, see page 10.  
 Fig. 3 Approaching the treasure hunting problem. Four possibilities were offered, and the popularity of each chosen combination of approaches is contrasted for museums and Units. Shaded combinations are those which included 'liaison' as a possibility.

## THE WORK OF A LOCAL SOCIETY AND ITS INTERACTION WITH PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Brian Charge

### Introduction

The Haverhill and District Archaeological Group was formed in 1975 in an attempt to channel archaeological interest and enthusiasm in such a way that non-professionals would be able to make a useful contribution to the discipline. The primary objectives have been to investigate an area within a 10km radius of the town (which includes parts of Cambridgeshire, Essex and Suffolk) using various methods of fieldwork, but excluding excavation since it was recognised that the group lacked the interpretive and analytical skills necessary to undertake excavations. It was felt that the local knowledge, enthusiasm and above all the time which members were prepared to devote to their hobby, would be most usefully employed in a programme of fieldwalking, survey and documentary research, thus we are accumulating non-destructive data for our professional colleagues who lack the manpower and time to conduct such general research.

It was recognised from the outset that it was essential to liaise with professional colleagues in all three counties so that the local fieldwork projects would provide a useful corpus of information. A local group has a duty to inform the public as well as the discipline of its work; therefore contact was made with two commercial companies, the Provincial Insurance Co. Ltd., of Haverhill, and Haverhill Meat Products Ltd., who provide financial assistance and printing facilities respectively. This enabled the group to produce an annual Journal in A4 format containing detailed reports on specific projects which is distributed to members, university libraries and county record offices. Exhibitions open to the public are staged in alternate years on the premises of the Provincial Insurance Co. Ltd. In 1982, some 2000 people toured the exhibition over three days.

### Organisation and Scope of Work

From the outset, it was recognised that a local society will be comprised of both keen members whose raison d'être is fieldwork as well as those who for various reasons such as age and lack of time, will be non-active in the fieldwork sense. Accordingly, it has been necessary to provide a programme of monthly lectures by guest speakers during the winter, with visits to sites, etc., during the summer months. This section of the membership still plays an important part in our fieldwork, since it provides secondary help in processing finds and cataloguing.

The Group committee decides the current fieldwork priorities